

MISCELLANY

Under this department are ordinarily grouped: News; Medical Economics; Correspondence; Twenty-five Years Ago column; Department of Public Health; California Board of Medical Examiners; and other columns as occasion may warrant. Items for the News column must be furnished by the fifteenth of the preceding month. For Book Reviews, see index on the front cover, under Miscellany.

NEWS

Coming Meetings—

American Medical Association, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 12-16, 1933, Olin West, M. D., 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Secretary.

California Medical Association, Del Monte, April 24-27, 1933, Emma W. Pope, M. D., 450 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Secretary.

Pacific Coast Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Los Angeles, December 8-10, 1932, Clarence A. DePuy, M. D., 230 Grand Avenue, Oakland, Secretary.

Western Surgical Association, Madison, Wisconsin, December 9-10, 1932, Frank R. Teachenor, M. D., 306 East Twelfth Street, Kansas City, Missouri, Secretary.

Nobel Prizes in Medicine.—Again last week the Stockholm Academy of Medicine awarded a Nobel Prize, jointly to Professor Sir Charles Scott Sherrington of Oxford and Professor Edgar Douglas Adrian of Cambridge, for their separate but complimentary studies of nerves. Both are experimental physiologists. Professor Sherrington never practiced medicine. Professor Adrian practiced only during the war when lack of physicians forced him into a London hospital. . . . The Sherrington-Adrian award gave Great Britain a score of six Nobel Prizes in Medicine, against the two for the United States. Previous Britons: the late Sir Ronald Ross (1902), Archibald Vivian Hill (1922), John James Rickard Macleod (1923, while at Toronto), Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins (1929). The United States Nobelmen: French-born Alexis Carrel (1912), Austrian-born Karl Landsteiner (1930).—*Time*, November 7, 1932.

Pan-Pacific Surgical Association, Honolulu, Hawaii.—As a result of a questionnaire that was circulated on April 20, 1932, the Honolulu, Hawaii, local committee of the Pan-Pacific Surgical Association, at a meeting held on September 22, unanimously decided that the projected 1933 congress be postponed for at least one year or longer, dependent upon the improvement in world economic conditions. From the questionnaire, it is definitely determined that there would be very scanty attendance from those members who attended in 1929, and while keen interest was expressed by practically all of the participants of that meeting, very few of them were able to say that they could make a return trip in 1933.

San Diego Academy of Medicine.—The following lectures were delivered before the San Diego Academy of Medicine:

December 6—"Diseases of the Biliary Tract" by Dr. Frank H. Lahey.

December 8 and 9—"Toxemias of Pregnancy," by Dr. E. D. Plass.

San Francisco Heart Committee.—The Heart Committee of the San Francisco County Medical Society held its third annual postgraduate symposium on heart disease November 16 and 17, in half-day sessions at the San Francisco, Letterman General, Stanford University, and University of California hospitals. The program was arranged by Dr. Gordon E. Hein

and Dr. J. Marion Read, assisted by the Committee on Education and Publicity, of which Dr. John P. Strickler is chairman. There was a total attendance of 455, and fifty cities of California were represented.

The following subjects were discussed:

History of the Development of Our Knowledge of Coronary Occlusion—Gordon E. Hein, M. D.

Angina Pectoris and Coronary Occlusion—Diagnosis and Management—Harold P. Hill, M. D.

Presentation of Cases of Coronary Occlusion—George D. Barnett, M. D., Le Roy H. Briggs, M. D., and staff.

Electrocardiographic Aids in the Diagnosis of Coronary Occlusion—J. Marion Read, M. D.

Spontaneous Rupture of Heart—A. M. Moody, M. D. Various Types of Heart Disease—Demonstration with patients—W. C. Munly, M. D.

Cardiac Arrhythmia—Arthur L. Bloomfield, M. D.

The First Heart Sound—William Dock, M. D.

Mercurial Diuretics in Heart Disease—Garnett Cheney, M. D.

The Treatment of Cardiovascular Syphilis—Charles W. Barnett, M. D.

Thyroid Heart Disease—J. K. Lewis, M. D.

Hypertension—Walter Boardman, M. D.

Interpretation of Electrocardiograms—William J. Kerr, M. D.

Problems and Prognosis of Heart Disease—Eugene S. Kilgore, M. D.

Digitalis Ineffectiveness in Congestive Heart Failure—John J. Sampson, M. D.

X-Ray Diagnosis of Cardiovascular Disease—Francis Rochex, M. D.

The annual meeting and election of officers was held on November 17. The new officers of the Heart Committee for 1933 are: Major W. C. Munly, chairman; Gordon E. Hein, vice-chairman; J. Marion Read, secretary.

The Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. At the annual meeting of the Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, which was held October 28 at the New York Academy of Medicine, the following physicians were elected to active membership: Doctors H. O. Bames and W. S. Kiskadden of Los Angeles, Doctors G. B. O'Connor and George W. Pierce of San Francisco, and Dr. Howard Updegraff of Hollywood.

New York Academy of Medicine Broadcast.—The New York Academy of Medicine is having a broadcast of medical subjects at 8:30 a. m. on Mondays. The attention of the profession is called to this broadcast in order that they may advise their patients to listen in.

Cod-Liver Oil and British Custom Duties.—Smart Sir Hubert Samuel, leader of the orthodox (Free Trade) Liberal party, fired an effective broadside of cod-liver oil last week at the MacDonald-Baldwin National Government from which he and Lord Snowden resigned on the tariff issue. "I want to give just one illustration," cried Sir Herbert last week at a female Liberal rally, "of how the interests of the British consumer were ignored by the National Government at the Ottawa [Tariff] Conference. The most valuable medicine for delicate children is cod-liver oil. Hundreds of thousands of poor parents in

this country have to buy bottle after bottle to save the lives and strengthen the bodies of their babies, and most of it has been coming from Norway duty free. But now the delegates of the British Government have agreed at Ottawa to impose a tariff of 45 per cent on cod-liver oil for the benefit of Newfoundland. How did they dare make this enormous addition to the cost of medicine essential to the health of our poorest children? But there it stands on the records of Ottawa, signed in behalf of this country by Stanley Baldwin!"—*Time*.

Honors to Professor S. L. Millard Rosenberg.—During the last several years, readers of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE have had the opportunity of reading in the Lure of Medical History department a number of articles written by S. L. Millard Rosenberg, Ph. D., professor of Spanish at the University of California at Los Angeles. A recent honor which has come to this contributor has been that of election to the Academia Espanola, the highest Spanish honor to which an American scholar in the field of Hispanic studies can officially attain. The Spanish academy, established in 1713, and limited to twenty-four active members, is the final authority in Castilian usages, as recorded in its dictionary and grammar.

New Cancer Films.—In the interests of medical education *The American Journal of Cancer* is offering, without cost, a series of motion picture films on cancer for showing before medical groups. The films now ready for distribution are "Cancer of the Skin," based on material gathered by Dr. Joseph Colt Bloodgood and Dr. Charles F. Geschickter of Johns Hopkins Hospital, and one showing "Technical Methods of Cancer Research," taken at the Institute of Cancer Research, Columbia University. The films are obtainable in either 16 or 35 mm. widths, and are adequately titled so that no explanation is required while they are being shown. They are available for use in the United States only. Full information concerning the films can be obtained from the Motion Picture Department, *American Journal of Cancer*, 1145 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Breeders of Parakeets Fight Embargo in Vain.—With parakeet breeders clamoring for relief, federal and state authorities admit they are powerless to raise the quarantine on the 150,000 birds in this state, laid during the recent psittacosis scare. This is the reason: Under both quarantines the "love birds" may be shipped into or out of California if they are proved not to have parrot fever, but the only way to find out is by an autopsy.

So hard hit is the business that the State Legislature may be asked to provide relief similar to that given stockmen in the foot-and-mouth epidemic a few years ago, Dr. John H. Graves, president of the State Board of Health, said.

In an effort to provide a diagnosis without an autopsy, Dr. Karl F. Meyer, director of the Hooper Foundation at the University of California Hospital, is conducting experiments, but has not reached conclusions yet.—*Los Angeles Times*.

Medical Aptitude Test for 1933 Will Be Offered By University of California.—The University of California will participate in the third annual medical aptitude test held nationally by the Association of American Medical Colleges on December 9, at 7:30 p. m., according to an announcement made recently by Dean G. D. Louderback of the College of Letters and Science.

A passing grade in this test, although not necessary for entrance to the University of California Medical School, is an entrance requirement for approximately 90 per cent of the medical schools in the United States, says Dean Louderback, and all students on the Berkeley or Los Angeles campus who expect to enter a medical school in 1933 should take the test. It will

not be given again this academic year.—*University of California Clip Sheet*.

Death of Dr. William Englebach.—Dr. William Englebach, fifty-five, world-renowned authority on endocrinology, died in a hospital in Springfield, Illinois, from complications of heart disease. Doctor Englebach had been ill since May and entered the hospital in Springfield on June 12. He was buried in Arenzville, where he was born. He formerly was a resident of Santa Barbara.

University of California Tries Using Air Injection in Brain for X-Rays.—One of the most extensive studies yet made of a special technique for x-raying the human skull and brain which requires the substitution of air for a portion of the normal brain fluid has just been completed by the University of California Medical School, and will be reported upon in detail at a meeting of the Radiological Society of North America.

Dr. Robert S. Stone, who made the x-ray studies in collaboration with Dr. O. W. Jones of the department of neurosurgery, will present a paper on "Results of Encephalographic Studies Using the Gravity Method."

The method of substituting air for brain fluid in taking x-rays of the skull is not new, having been first used in 1916, but it has not been widely adopted because of a lack of accurate information. The object of the University of California study was to supply further information on the proper use of the method.

Approximately 150 cases have been x-rayed at the hospital since January, 1930, by this method, where other means of examination or diagnosis were found inadequate. The procedure is to make a lumbar puncture of the spinal column, draw out a certain amount of the spinal fluid, and then inject air in the place of the fluid. The presence of this air offers a contrast to the brain substance and makes it possible to obtain usable x-ray photographs.

Support of Voluntary Charity Hospitals.—A warning to the public against forcing the voluntary charitable hospitals of the United States—which served more than five million patients last year—to lower their medical standards was issued here yesterday by Dr. William F. Snow,* president of the National Health Council.

Doctor Snow's statement was on behalf of a group of representatives from a score of national public health organizations who met to consider the hospital situation throughout the country. "The finances of the charitable hospitals have suffered greatly," he said, "and notwithstanding the urgency of contributions to emergency relief agencies, the public must support the hospitals liberally if it expects the hospitals to continue to give the best that medical science can offer."

"According to statistics prepared by the American Medical Association," said Doctor Snow, "110 hospitals closed their doors in 1931 and other hospitals are considering such a move because of the financial stringency. There are more than 4,500 of these voluntary charitable hospitals in the United States, many of which have found it necessary to close a large number of their wards and private rooms."

"The American Hospital Association has pointed out that in the voluntary charitable hospitals the spread between income and expense has been greatly increased in the last three years. On the average they are now giving more than 30 per cent of their services to patients who cannot pay the cost of their care, while their earnings have fallen off 15 to 20 per cent. For years past they have had to look to the American public for some \$100,000,000 in contributions for the support of this free work." . . .

* Editor's Note.—Dr. William F. Snow will be remembered by older members of the California Medical Association as the efficient secretary of the California State Board of Health two decades or so ago.

Income Drops for Doctors.—One-half the country's doctors are shown by the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care to have received net incomes of \$3800 and less during 1929.

The nongovernmental committee, of which Secretary Wilbur is chairman, reported the average net income of the 121,000 in private practice was \$5,467, with the median for all doctors, including the 21,000 in salaried positions, \$3827.

Physicians' incomes were reported as having dropped 17 per cent in 1930 and probably a larger percentage in 1931. In 1929, 15 per cent of the doctors were listed as receiving less than \$1,500 for professional activities, while 4 per cent lost money.

More efficient use of facilities and the elimination of unnecessary treatment were among the things recommended to increase net incomes, with the explanation the average netted was 61 per cent of the gross receipts.

William August Puckner.—For a great many years Doctor Puckner has supplied the state and a few other medical journals with abstracts from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. These abstracts dealt particularly with the work of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry, the Bureau of Investigation, and later the Council on Physical Therapy and the Committee on Foods. Included also were epitomized comments of pertinent query and minor notes or editorials from the *Journal*. This work Doctor Puckner did in addition to his tremendous burdens as secretary of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry. . . .

From the report of the American Medical Association Council on Chemistry and Pharmacy the following is taken:

William August Puckner was born February 24, 1864, at New Holstein, Wisconsin. He died in the Presbyterian Hospital, Chicago, October 1, 1932. He had been in failing health for a long time and in the hospital some ten weeks.

The creation of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry was authorized by the Board of Trustees of the American Medical Association February 3, 1905; the first meeting of the newly created council was held at Pittsburgh some ten days later. Professor Puckner, one of the original members, attended that meeting and was active in formulating the principles on which the council has worked, as expressed in its official rules of procedure. One year later he became secretary, a position of grave responsibility; he filled it well and faithfully for twenty-six years and seven months. . . .

When his eyes began failing and when he realized that the condition would inevitably result in blindness, Professor Puckner courageously prepared himself to face the handicap. He investigated the practicability of Braille's system for the blind and the typewriter; both of these he used. He kept in touch with current medical and chemical literature, both English and foreign, especially German, by having matter read to him, and in the case of important articles, recorded on the dictaphone for review at home; for his determination to overcome this disability compelled him to work at night as well as day. To those who knew him at his daily work, Doctor Puckner seemed to have dedicated his life to that which seemed nearest to his heart—the success of the council and its efforts to advance scientific therapeutics. With patience in adversity, with sincerity of purpose, with conscientious devotion, he carried on. His heart was in his work: his life devoted to the cause he served.

The council, individually and collectively, wish to express their high regard and affection for Professor Puckner as a friend and co-worker and admiration for the way he carried on, for his executive ability, for his efficiency in spite of handicap, for his loyalty. In his death the council has lost a member of unique value: the medical profession, a servant who unobtrusively served it faithfully for a quarter of a century.

CORRESPONDENCE

Subject of Following Letter: California Law Regarding Abortions.

To the Editor:—We are enclosing herewith a copy of a letter written in answer to a request for the law regulating reporting of abortions, and we are wondering if it would be worth while to quote in *CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE*, Chapter 417, Statutes 1929, page 739, so that all licentiates might be made aware of this statute.

Very truly yours,

C. B. PINKHAM, M. D.,

Secretary-Treasurer.

Dear Doctor:—Your letter addressed to the State Board asking for "A pamphlet covering the state law on reporting abortions or attempted abortions" has been forwarded us for reply.

The only law we can find which might be inferred as requiring the reporting of abortions will be found in the Statutes of 1929, page 739, Chapter 417, an Act requiring the reporting of personal injuries, wherein it is made the duty of every physician and surgeon to report to the appropriate officers any person in his charge or under his care "suffering from any wound or other injury . . . inflicted upon any person in violation of any penal law of this state." Inasmuch as abortion is a penal offense, we assume that it necessarily would fall under the provision of this statute.

Very truly yours,

C. B. PINKHAM, M. D.,

Secretary-Treasurer.

Subject of Following Letters: Rabies—As Viewed by a Lay Newspaper Health Section Columnist and by a California Health Officer.*

October 7, 1932.

William Brady, M. D.,
c/o Los Angeles Times,
100 North Broadway,
Los Angeles, California.

Dear Doctor Brady:

I noticed some time ago in an article in your health column of the *Los Angeles Times* that you stated you did not believe there was such a thing as human rabies. I have seen four deaths from human rabies during the past ten years; and each year for a number of years we have treated from three to four hundred persons who have been bitten by mad dogs, employing the Pasteur method.

I thought you would be interested in the attached abstract of a case of a man who died of rabies recently (Alfred E. Yoder, report of September 21, 1932), and went to autopsy in the county coroner's office. I am somewhat surprised that a man who signs himself "M. D." would make such a statement to the public, which I can assure you leads to serious difficulty for health departments. It seems to me you have an excellent opportunity in your articles to teach modern public health, and thus indirectly save many human lives. It would appear to me that a man in your position ought to keep in touch with public health methods in his area and check his ideas carefully with what is actually occurring, as medical knowledge is constantly advancing.

I assure you this is not sent in a spirit of antagonism, but in an earnest endeavor to present to you facts which should be valuable. There is so much misinformation being given to the public that I feel you have a grave responsibility to the public health.

Yours very truly,

J. L. POMEROY, M. D.,

Los Angeles County Health Officer.

* See, also, editorial comment in this issue of *California and Western Medicine*, page 403.